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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

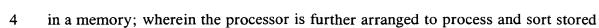
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2	at least one safe comprising:
3	a housing having an interior compartment for securing money, and
4	an outer door having an electronic lock mechanism to control access to the interior
5	compartment;
6	a data input device;
7	an electronic display;
8	a connector interface mounted to the housing; and
9	a control system arranged to communicate with the data input device,
0	electronic display, connector interface and electronic lock mechanism, wherein the
l 1	control system includes a processor programmed to control operation of the
12	electronic lock, as well as operate as a central system controller when connected
13	to at least one other remote safe via the connector interface to monitor and
14	accumulate financial and operational information for each remote unit.
1	2. The system of claim 1 wherein the at least one safe further
2	comprises a bill validator apparatus mounted to the housing for receiving and
3	validating bills of various denominations, and a storage device located within the
4	safe for storing all validated bills, wherein the processor is programmed to maintain
5	a record of all received and validated bills.
1	3. The system of claim 1 further comprising a cash dispensing
2	apparatus mounted to the housing, the cash dispensing apparatus including a set of
3	openings in the housing arranged to be loaded with containers each containing
4	money of a predetermined value, and a separate opening and dispensing tray in the

An electronic lock and money control system comprising:

4. The system of claim 1 wherein the control system is further programmed to accumulate and track deposits and withdrawals of money, recognize user identification data, and store transaction data and associated user identity data

housing to dispense money containers for removal from the safe.



- 5 transaction and operational data to generate an audit report and accounting reports.
 - 5. The system of claim 1 wherein a remote safe unit is connected to the connector interface, the remote safe unit comprising a bill validator apparatus mounted to a housing thereof for receiving and validating bills of various denominations, and a storage device located within the remote safe for storing all validated bills, wherein the processor is programmed to maintain a record of all
- 1 6. The system of claim 1 wherein the connection interface 2 comprises a communications port to allow communication between the control

bills received and validated in the remote safe.

system and a remote computer.

- 7. The system of claim 1 wherein a remote safe unit is connected to the connector interface, the remote safe unit comprising a cash dispensing apparatus mounted to a housing thereof, the cash dispensing apparatus including a set of openings in the housing arranged to be loaded with containers each containing money of a predetermined value, and a separate opening and dispensing tray in the housing to dispense cash containers for removal from the safe, wherein the processor is programmed to maintain a record of all money load and dispensed from the remote safe.
- 8. The system of claim 1 wherein the processor is programmed to recognize different levels of user system access authority.
 - 9. The system of claim 1 wherein one or more remote safe units are connected to the connector interface, and the processor is further programmed to accumulate and track deposits and withdrawals of money, recognize user identification data, and store transaction data and associated user identity data in a memory for each remote unit, wherein the processor is arranged to process and sort stored transaction and operational data to generate an individual and totaled audit and accounting reports.

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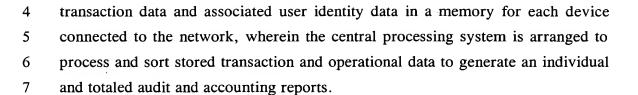
10. The system of claim 9 wherein the processor is arranged to
selectively generate financial reports including individual user reports, cash showing
actual cash present by location, and end day reports, as well as an audit report
itemizing the occurrence of selected events during a specific time period.

- 11. A network of interconnected electronic locking and money control devices comprising:
- a central processing system integrated with one of the electronic locking and money control devices and arranged to control operation of the integrated device, wherein the central processing system is connected to all other network devices, and further arranged to communicate with all the other network devices and provide network control of all the other devices.
- 12. The network of claim 11 wherein the central processing system is arranged to automatically detect and assign network addresses for devices added to the network.
 - 13. The network of claim 11 wherein the other network devices comprise a data entry subsystem arranged to receive and recognize user identification data, and transmit the data to the central processing system, wherein the central processing system is arranged to determine whether the user is authorized to access the system, and controlling operation of the network device based on the authorization determination.
- 1 14. The network of claim 11 wherein the data entry system is 2 arranged to receive the user identification data in the form of at least a user number, 3 electronic key, or biometric identification.
 - 15. The network of claim 11 wherein a network device comprises an electronic lock and control arrangement.

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16. The network of claim 11 wherein a network device is a cash
dispensing apparatus, the cash dispensing apparatus including a set of openings
arranged to be loaded with containers each containing cash of a predetermined
value, and a separate opening and dispenser to dispense cash containers for removal
from the safe, wherein the cash dispensing apparatus is arranged to maintain an
accounting of all containers and provide a report to the central processing system.

- 17. The network of claim 11 wherein a network device comprises a universal interface designed to communicate with a plurality of types of bill validators arranged to receive and validate bills of various denominations, and a storage device for storing all validated bills, wherein the universal interface is programmed to maintain a record of all received and validated bills and provide a report to the central processing system.
- 18. The network of claim 11 wherein the central processing system is fully programmable via a data entry subsystem arranged to receive and recognize user identification data, and transmit the data to the central processing system.
- 19. The network of claim 11 wherein the central processing system is programmed to recognize different levels of user system access authority.
- 20. The network of claim 19 wherein the central processing system is programmed to recognize a level of user system access authority as a function of time or date.
- 21. The network of claim 11 wherein the central processing system is programmed to assign selected devices to an access group to provide flexible levels of user access.
- 22. The network of claim 11 wherein the central processing system is programmed to accumulate and track deposits and withdrawals of money from all devices on the network, recognize user identification data, and store



- 23. The network of claim 11 wherein the central processing system is programmed to develop entities of money that comprise one or more of the devices connected to the network and process the developed entities as a single device for access and accounting purposes, while also being able to track each device separately.
- 24. The network of claim 23 wherein the central processing system is programmed such that entities of money may comprise other entities of money as well as one or more of the devices on the network or remote sub-networks and treat them as one for access and accounting purposes, without losing the ability to track each entity of money or device separately if needed.
- 25. The network of claims 11 wherein the central processing system is arranged to selectively generate financial reports including individual user reports, a cash report showing actual cash present by location, and end-day reports, as well as an audit report itemizing the occurrence of selected events during a specific time period.
- The network of claim 11 wherein each device connected to the network is arranged to store individual configuration information, monetary totals and a selected audit information to facilitate replacement of the central processing system.